Celebrating Terror:
Antisemitism online after the Hamas attacks on Israel

Preliminary Results I

26 October 2023

The Decoding Antisemitism research team, https://decoding-antisemitism.eu

Centre for Research on Antisemitism, Technische Universität Berlin

Contact: info@decoding-antisemitism.eu

Project Lead: Dr Matthias J. Becker

Co-authors: Dr Laura Ascone, Dr Matthew Bolton, Alexis Chapelan, Pia Haupeltshofer, Alexa Krugel, Karolina Placzynta, Marcus Scheiber, Victor Tschiskale

Decoding
Antisemitism

Key findings

- Since 7 October, Decoding Antisemitism has analysed more than 11,000 comments posted on *YouTube* and *Facebook* in response to mainstream media reports of the Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel.

- Our analysis reveals a significant jump in the number of antisemitic comments, even compared with other violent incidents in the Middle East.

- CELEBRATION, SUPPORT FOR and JUSTIFICATION OF THE HAMAS TERROR ATTACKS make up the largest proportion of antisemitic comments – ranging between 19 % in German *Facebook* comment sections and 53 and 54.7 % in French *Facebook* and UK *YouTube* comment sections, respectively – in contrast to previous studies where direct affirmation of violence was negligible.

- The number of antisemitic comments CELEBRATING THE ATROCITIES rises in response to media reports of attacks on Israelis/Jews themselves, compared with reports on the conflict more generally.

- Beyond affirmation of the Hamas attacks, other frequently expressed antisemitic concepts across the corpus included DENIALS OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST, attributing SOLE GUILT to Israel for the entire history of the conflict, describing Israel as a TERRORIST STATE, CONSPIRACY THEORIES about Jewish POWER, and ideas of inherent Israeli EVIL.

- As with the project's past research, this analysis reveals a diversity of antisemitic concepts and communicative strategies. The findings reaffirm that antisemitism appears as a multifaceted mosaic, as a result of which it is not possible to deal with all the elements. Only the most prominent tendencies are brought into focus here.

Decoding
Antisemitism

1. Introduction

On 7 October 2023, Hamas terrorists broke through the border between Gaza and southern Israel and unleashed a wave of violence against Israeli civilians, murdering over 1,300 and taking more than 200 hostages back to Gaza. In response, the Israeli military has undertaken a bombing campaign against Hamas targets across Gaza, with many civilians killed and displaced. This horror of the Hamas attacks and the subsequent escalation of hostilities between Israel and Hamas, resulting in unprecedented numbers of victims on both sides, has led to frenzied reactions both on- and offline. According to early reports, street-level antisemitic abuse, both verbal and physical, has skyrocketed.[1] Jihadist terrorist attacks perpetrated in France and Belgium are evidence of the impact that Hamas' attacks have had not only on Jewish communities but also on society as a whole.

In situations of such intensity, the language used to frame discussions of real-world events by the media, politicians, 'opinion leaders' or 'influencers' takes on new importance. A testimony to that is, for example, the way the media reported the explosion at the al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza on 17 October: reliant solely on Hamas sources, ostensibly credible institutions such as the *BBC* and *New York Times* were quick to pin the blame for the bombing on Israel, claiming 500 Palestinians had been killed (Mounk 2023). These reports set off a chain reaction which led, among other things, to attacks on the US Embassy in Lebanon, riots in Berlin, including the firebombing of a synagogue, the destruction of the El Hamma synagogue in Tunisia, and the cancelling of a crucial summit with US President Joe Biden in Jordan. Within hours, evidence emerged that a misfiring Islamic Jihad rocket was responsible for the explosion, that the rocket had hit the hospital car park and not the buildings, and that the figure of 500 dead was implausible (Biesecker 2023). *BBC News* and other outlets later altered their headlines (cf. BBC 2023a, McLaughlin 2023, Telegraph 2023)[2] (while leaving the initial tweets online unchanged) but this did not prevent the debunked initial claims, seemingly verified by mainstream reporters, from being taken up by anti-Israel politicians, journalists and activists.

The circulation of unverified rumours has not only heightened the tension around the conflict but poses a risk to the safety of Jews across Europe and beyond. That danger is exacerbated in the digital space. More specifically, it demonstrates the **power of language and imagery**: in spite of belatedly modified headlines, the initial framing means that countless people now carry the image of a brutal Israeli attack on a hospital in their minds (Lakoff 2014). This lasting impact applies to both social and conventional media, albeit far

---

[1] For the UK, see CST 2023, for France L'Express 2023, for Germany RIAS 2023, for the US and worldwide ADL 2023.

[2] It should also be noted that the *BBC* has faced huge criticism from British Jewish groups as well as politicians since 7 October for refusing to label Hamas as terrorists, cf. https://x.com/SkyNews/status/1713976698998317377?s=20, BBC 2023b, Ducourtieux 2023.

Decoding
Antisemitism

more strongly to the former, where decentralised, bottom-up processes allow information and thus also hate speech, calls for violence and disinformation to circulate much more quickly and unhindered. In the case laid out above, however, disinformation seems to have emerged from the mainstream outlets, only to be debunked by unaffiliated social media users. This further demonstrates the collapse of the barriers separating the imperatives of social media communication – the drive to collect likes, retweets, clicks and views – from 'official' journalism.

The apparent connection between the way this event was reported online and the real-world incidents that followed underlines once more the influence potential of social media on both public discourse and public actions. Given that web users now seem to routinely read the online debates and discussions which take place in comment threads 'below the line,' it is more important than ever to understand how their worldviews on this issue are being shaped in real time by the concepts, distortions and arguments prevalent in social media discourse.

In the weeks following the Hamas terrorist attacks, Decoding Antisemitism has been analysing the online discourse around these events. Our focus has not been on the online behaviour of radical individuals or groups, but rather discursive spaces within the political mainstream – the comments posted by social media users in the UK, Germany and France in response to reports on the atrocities by leading media outlets from the centre left to the centre right. This preliminary study presents our initial findings in a concise form. While these conclusions will be subject to further analysis, it is already clear that the response to these events **represent a turning point in social media discourse** and in the studies Decoding Antisemitism has been conducting since 2020.

In previous studies, particularly those related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, classic antisemitic distortions (e.g. that Israel is INHERENTLY EVIL or CONTROLS THE WORLD), history-distorting analogies (that Israel is a COLONIAL, APARTHEID STATE or even a NAZI REGIME) have frequently combined with a more or less open DENIAL OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST; they were also often used to justify brutal attacks on Israelis as an inevitable response. However, explicit affirmation, glorification or celebrations of violent killings of Jews have hitherto been relatively rare.

Our **preliminary findings** from this investigation indicate that this is no longer the case: we have found a significant rise in the number of comments **directly affirming and glorifying the Hamas attacks**, or calling for further attacks through the use of threats and death wishes. As a result, the public discourse appears to have moved from distorting projections onto the Jewish-Israeli out-group towards **forms of self-positioning** according to which users relativise, deny, or even justify, welcome and celebrate Hamas' crimes against civilians. Conceptually, this represents a stark contrast to all the corpus analyses we have conducted so far. This preliminary study suggests that the events have been marked by a **normalisation of explicit hate speech** and a **potential radicalisation of even politically**

4

**Decoding
Antisemitism**

moderate online milieus. The terrorist events of 7 October, which the Israeli public describes as the worst crime since the Holocaust, have thus opened a new chapter for the articulation of antisemitism in 'mainstream' discourses on social media.

Not only did the above-mentioned conceptual changes occur in antisemitic communication, but the overall level of antisemitic comments within the datasets **increased significantly**, sometimes accounting for 50 % or even 60 % of a comment section. This is a dramatic leap from the 10–15 % of antisemitic comments on the French and 20–25 % of antisemitic comments on the UK side in Israel-related topics (see our 2nd Discourse Report).[3]

Another specific feature, certainly in the British context and concerning the measurement period 7–13 October alone, is the **dependence on the respective events** within the escalation phase. During this time frame, the media of the three countries reported on a) the crimes committed by Hamas in Israel, b) the retaliation by the Israeli Defense Forces in Gaza, and c) the international reactions (politics, media, other institutions, the public). While on the French side, for example, there was an expected increase in antisemitic speech in online threads as soon as Israel's reactions stood in the foreground of the reporting, on the British side we observed a much higher frequency of antisemitic speech also directly reacting to media reports on the terror experienced by Israeli civilians. As this observation concerns the first week of the escalation phase alone, the specificities of these correlations can still change. Nevertheless, the observed rise in antisemitism in response to journalistic reports as well as imagery of brutal attacks on Jews recorded and shared by Hamas itself seem to represent a new development in the evolution of antisemitism in online communication.

About this preliminary study

In the empirical part of our study, we present the results from our **analysis of 11,200 comments** taken from the *YouTube* and *Facebook* profiles of major news outlets in the UK, France and Germany.[4] In the course of collecting the complete comment threads, we created so-called corpora or offline datasets, which we then **analysed qualitatively** on various levels (ideation, conceptual-content properties and linguistic-semiotic structures).[5] We were not only interested in how often antisemitism occurs in the context of a discourse event such as the current escalation phase, but which stereotypes and analogies emerge and what linguistic (and partly visual-multimodal) patterns the comments employed to communicate the concepts. We used a differentiated operationalisation of the **IHRA**

---

[3] https://decoding-antisemitism.eu/publications/#discourse-reports.

[4] Due to the new guidelines, our research project no longer has access to *Twitter*/*X* since May 2023, a problem whose scale is difficult to overstate given the increase in hate speech and disinformation emerging there.

[5] Next to our Discourse Reports, please find our research design presented here: https://decoding-antisemitism.eu/about.

Decoding Antisemitism

definition of antisemitism (IHRA 2016), in which both classic and updated stereotypes, analogies and discursive strategies for the production of antisemitic ideas are mapped.[6] All corpus examples presented in the empirical part are followed by a tag indicating their source; a full list of sources is available at the end of the study. German and French examples have been translated, with the original included in brackets.

In line with the focus of our corpora and analyses, section 2 presents the results of our analyses of *YouTube* comment sections of a) British and b) German outlets, while section 3 summarises our findings with regard to the *Facebook* profiles of a) British, b) French and c) German outlets.

The **measurement period** of this study lies between the starting point of the current escalation phase on 7 October and extends to 12 October, a total of five days during which the media and political focus was on Hamas' terror crimes and the initial reactions of the Israeli government and military, but also the first international echo.

The *YouTube* dataset consists of 4,000 comments from British media profiles and 2,000 comments from German media profiles. For the *Facebook* corpus we examined 2,200 British, 1,700 French and 1,300 German media profile comments. The differences in the size of the individual corpora result from either the lower density of online reactions in the respective language communities, or fewer opportunities to leave comments (many German media deactivate comments on *YouTube*, for example). For each online thread collected, we used a sample of the first 100 comments.[7]

2. Insights into *YouTube* (UK and Germany)

2.1 UK

2.1.1 Structure of the dataset

The *YouTube* corpus of British media represents by far the largest dataset of this study, with the *BBC News*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Times* in particular uploading reports in high frequency from the first moment news of the attacks emerged.[8] This attention was

---

[6] In early 2024, Palgrave Macmillan will publish a *Lexicon* (open access) that, in more than 40 chapters, will give clear insights into how we recognise online antisemitism in its explicit and implicit manifestation: https://decoding-antisemitism.eu/publications/announcement-lexicon.

[7] In order to continue describing the phenomena fairly and accurately, we have maintained the same classification system of antisemitic concepts which we have applied since the start of the Decoding Antisemitism research project. We have also carefully considered the context of the current events and its significance for the interpretation of comments; in rare cases this has resulted in classifying certain comments supportive of Palestine differently than in the previous years.

[8] On the social media profiles of the *Daily Mail*, *The Spectator* and *The Telegraph*, which we usually take into account (see also 3.1), we saw fewer activities related to this discourse event from both the outlets and the

relatively balanced over the first weekend, giving space to both the terror by Hamas and Israel's immediate response (and marginally to the reactions in the US and UK). The 4,000-comment corpus is made up of: *The Guardian*: 1,100 comments; *BBC News*: 1,100; *The Independent*: 1,000; *The Times*: 800.[9]

It is worth noting that in the British context we usually observed 15–25 % antisemitism on social media as soon as the Arab-Israeli conflict was reported on. With the current escalation, the figures in the comment sections of *YouTube* shot up – sometimes to 30–40 % or, as in the case of one *Independent* thread, even to 54 %. Strikingly, this latter thread was in response to a video showing details of the massacre in the Kfar Aza kibbutz.

The unprecedented density of antisemitism in the comment sections under clips presenting the atrocities committed by Hamas may be surprising since, in view of the scope and brutality, we might expect to see either solidarity and sympathy or, in the case of a partisan attitude, silence or a change of topic on the commenters' end. Even though the subsequent phases of the current escalation are yet to be analysed, the proportions between the media report focus and the presence of open antisemitism in the comments, which strongly contradicted our expectations, will continue to be a matter of concern. The above findings represent for us – even in the context of anonymous, highly emotional and therefore often destructive social media debates – a new extreme point between a lack of empathy and open gloating.

2.1.2   Main concepts

By far the most frequently communicated form of antisemitism was the **affirmation, welcoming and sometimes even celebration of violence and murder against civilians** in Southern Israel. This observation represents a new dimension of antisemitic hate speech. Self-positioning in antisemitic discourse is nothing new in itself. In our past studies, comments frequently distorted or even denied the more distant events of the Holocaust, or trivialised and justified incidents of antisemitic violence on Europe's streets. Here, however, the videos directly show brutal violence, torture, rape and murder of civilians of all ages. Instead of giving commenters pause, it seems as if the radical nature of the violence fuels the verbal violence of web users, or makes these attitudes visible all at once.

Affirmation was often expressed indirectly, i.e. in a context-sensitive way. When a news clip reports that an Islamist terrorist organisation massacred people while shouting "Allahu Akbar," repetitive utterances by viewers of this statement, or others such as "Alhamdulillah," "💪🧒🇵🇸" (BBC-YT1), "Long live Palestine 🇵🇸" (GUA-YT1) or "Resistance is

---

users, or the comment function was altogether deactivated – an aspect that also determined the analysis of *YouTube* profiles of the German media outlets (see 2.2).

[9] This compilation results from the density of the reports published on *YouTube* and the requirement that the respective thread had to consist of at least 100 user comments in order to be included in the corpus.

Decoding
Antisemitism

yours" (TIM-YT2) constitute an indirect affirmation of the antisemitic brutality presented in the clips. The nature of the attacks determined the classification of such comments – had the news reports been about Israeli military interventions in Gaza or the West Bank, rather than direct attacks on civilians, they may have been interpreted in a non-antisemitic way. Some commenters verbalised their affirmation even more clearly: "Long overdue" (BBC-YT1), "The Palestinians are finally fighting back 😂😂😂" (GUA-YT2), "Good job Palestine," "Go on lads!" (TIMES-YT[20231007a]), "So happy to see justice finally 🎉❤️" (TIM-YT3).

Additionally, comments affirmed violence in combination with other speech acts, such as **curses** and **death wishes** directed at Israel: "They deserve 60 years of this not only a day! Then we will have peace perhaps 🎉" (TIM-YT3). Comments also used puns or allusions to indiscriminately reject all Jews, rather than just Israelis or the territorial conflict: "JURN THE BEWS" (GUA-YT4); "The Palestinians will complete the job that the Austrian painter started 😊💯" (BBC-YT2). Moreover, some comments represented this as the starting point of a **glorified global conflict**: "Next stop Europe and America 😅😅💪💪🇵🇸🇵🇸" (TIM-YT3). In doing so, web users conjure up dichotomous notions between the West and Islam, as was often the case in the context of 9/11.

Web users often resort to **schadenfreude,** especially when commenting on the massacre of festival goers: "Peaceful community must treat like this everywhere ❤️😊❤️😊❤️" (GUA-YT7), "Lmao many were stopped that day" (IND-YT3), "Hahahah why r u runnin ???" (TIM-YT5), "This is better than Hollywood !" (IND-YT1), hugely relativising antisemitic violence portrayed in the videos.

Two clips shared by *The Independent* showing the abduction of female civilians triggered particular expressions of affirmation of sexual violence combined with gloating and **misogynist attitudes**: "They had a good time with her it seems like," "They are just taking her to a party... she will be the guest of honour..." (IND-YT2) or "That's the price paid for being cute" (IND-YT3). Furthermore, comments tended to justify violence against and abduction of female festival goers: "This woman was in the Israeli army so she should be treated like this, as she forwarded the genocide and land occupying of Palestinians" (IND-YT2), thus projecting the usual patterns of demonising Israel onto civilians. The comment sections are filled with comparable statements: "Every Israeli 'civilian' who has remained silent through decades of Israel's incremental invasion is guilty. Silence is complicity" (BBC-YT3).

In addition to the speech acts of affirmation, sarcasm and schadenfreude, comments expressed affirmation of violence via antisemitic concepts directed against Israel. The most common in this corpus were the DENIAL ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST (between 9.2 and 22.3 % of antisemitic comments) and the insinuation of Israel's SOLE GUILT for the conflict as a whole (between 11.8 to 22.9 %). Israel's right to exist was denied with comments such as: "Only the Palestinians exercise their 'right of return' to their ancestral land" (GUA-YT3) or "Third

Decoding
Antisemitism

Intifada! Full independence this time! 🇵🇸" (GUA-YT5), "It's the LIBERATION STRUGGLE" (IND-YT1).

The violence-affirming notion of ISRAEL'S SOLE GUILT IN THE CONFLICT provided additional justification for Hamas' atrocities: "The extent of a slap in the face is measured by who the person is who is being slapped. There are no innocent occupiers" (GUA-YT2). Given that the Hamas attacks took place within the 1967 Israeli borders, such comments ascribe the status of "occupiers" to all Israeli citizens, thereby depriving them of "innocence" and making them legitimate targets for violent reprisals. Comments also equated Israel to a TERRORIST STATE, claiming that it had been committing these very crimes itself, sometimes even for a long time: "Eye for an eye, baby for a baby" or "Feel the pain of how Israeli massacred Palestinian kids for 70 years" (IND-YT5), responding to counter speech with "Tell that to the Palestinian women and children who have had to endure this for 75 years. Revenge is good. They deserve it" or "sow the wind reap the storm" (IND-YT2). However, SOLE GUILT claims were also expressed indirectly. Below video clips showing the murder of civilians, comments referenced the concept of karma – inevitable comeuppance delivered by the higher power – to blame Israel for this escalation: "Karma!!!! The irony is killing me" (GUA-YT3), "What goes around comes around. Your witnessing it come around now" (GUA-YT6). Various comparisons exonerated Hamas while portraying Israel as a TERRORIST ENTITY: "It's Hostages taking Hostages, let's get it right!" (TIM-YT3). One user countered the critical statement "But attacking innocent civilians is totally wrong 🥹" by replying: "It's the way Israel taught them" (ibid.).

In the debates, the idea of Israel's SOLE GUILT also leads back to its classic form, the antisemitic stereotype of JEWISH GUILT FOR ANTISEMITISM and global conflicts: "We wouldn't have had this war in the first place if the religion about the whole land has been 'promised by god for the god's chosen' never existed" (TIM-YT4). The idea of JEWISH EVIL and GUILT becomes apparent also here: "End of isreal rise of humanity" (BBC-YT1).

Forms of DELEGITIMISATION also emerged in scornful, callous utterances: "Poor you land thieves," "Lives on stolen land. -expects no retaliation" (INDEP-YT[20231011a]), "RI(Pieces) settlers" (BBC-YT3), "The festival theme are 'Dancing at The Grabbed Land'" and "Imagine breaking out of an open a[i]r prison and finding your guards partying" (IND-YT3).

In CONSPIRACY THEORIES, commenters denied Hamas' crimes and insinuated JEWISH POWER OVER PUBLIC OPINION, sometimes falling back on metaphors that had already been popular in or before the Nazi era: "The 'hasbara' is fantastic; tentacles far and wide" (IND-YT5), or MYTHS reproducing ideas from the context of 9/11: "The irony that it was dancing, Israelis gunned down today and on 9/11 it was the 'dancing Israelis who knew about the World Trade Center and ' documented the incident for Israel' instead of alerting America and stopping September 11th" (TIM-YT5). Some comments went so far as to DENY THE HOLOCAUST and to claim that this 'lie' had only served to illegitimately establish Israel: "who started it by lying

Decoding
Antisemitism

about germany and using that as an excuse to steal land" (IND-YT4). **DENIAL OF ANTISEMITISM** also featured in CONSPIRACY THEORIES. Comments either claimed the destroyed kibbutzim were mere backdrops of a staged scenario ("fake news;" "I agree seems staged;" in an interview situation: "random soldier, fluent english" (IND-YT5); "cui bono? Who benefits...?" (BBC-YT4)), or questioned the antisemitic motivation of the terrorists: "Hamas chose Saturday because they knew that the Israelis were not working so as to avoid civilian casualties. How honourable you are. May God help the Palestinians against the Israeli terrorists" and "brother, they litterly took an Israeli mother to safety with her child, the only beating they are doing is to the soldiers" (TIM-YT1).

2.2 Germany

2.2.1 Structure of the dataset

The corpus of *YouTube* profiles of German news outlets is half the size of the British equivalent. This reflects the fact that many German media such as *Die Zeit* deactivated the comment function on the topic of the Arab-Israeli conflict or, in other cases, there were fewer than the minimum of 100 comments per thread.

The 2,000-comment corpus consists of 1,000 user comments from *Bild*, 300 from *Der Spiegel*, 200 each from *ZDF*, *Arte* and *EuroNews* and 100 from *WDR*. Thematically, eleven clips focus on Hamas and the attack on Israel on 7 October; five deal with Israel's reprisals and plans as well as the conflict in general, and four with reactions in Germany, Europe and Lebanon. The proportion of antisemitic statements varies widely and rises up to 25 %. Interestingly, all six threads where the percentage was higher than 20 % were related to the Hamas atrocities.

2.2.2 Main concepts

As with the British media profiles, the **AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE, TERROR AND MURDER** stands out also in the antisemitic comments on German-language *YouTube* media profiles. In the 20 examined threads, violence-affirming statements represented 41.3 % of antisemitic comments.

In this language community, too, web users repeated the recorded cries of Hamas terrorists in the form of "Allahu Akbar" (e.g. ZDF-YT1, EUR-YT1) – alternatively, they formulated vague demands such as "Freedom for Palestine🇵🇸" ["Freiheit für Palästina 🇵🇸] (ZDF-YT1) or ask "Can you blame the Palestinians?" ["Kann man es den Palästinenser übel nehmen?"] (EUR-YT1) which, in the context of reports on the Hamas attacks, indirectly affirmed the terrorists' actions. For the first time in these *YouTube* analyses, comments use paraglider icons to indirectly express affirmation of the terrorist actions "🪂🪂☁☁🪂" (SPI-YT2).

Decoding
Antisemitism

We recognised clearer praise in statements such as "Maşallah SubhanAllah keep it up guys" ["Maşallah SubhanAllah weiter so Jungs"], "Great performance👍" ["Saubere Leistung 👍"] (BIL-YT1), "We can be proud! 🇵🇸👊🎉" ["Wir können stolz sein! 🇵🇸👊🎉"] (EUR-YT1) or "Hamassssss will Win ! 💪👊" ["Hamassssss wird Siegen ! 💪👊"] (BIL-YT2). Using icons and emoticons, some commenters resorted to RACIST TROPES about Jews as well as 'infidels' in general, turning statements like "You have no chance 👨🐷" ["Ihr seid chancenlos 👨🐷"] (EUR-YT1) into INDIRECT THREATS against the entire West, which was referred to in the context of the thread. Users also communicate affirmation in conjunction with SCHADENFREUDE: "Happy New Year 🎉🎉" ["Frohes neues Jahr 🎉🎉"] (EUR-YT1) or "Glorious day today 😍" ["Herrlicher Tag heute 😍"] (EUR-YT2).

As in the British context, commenters combine their AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR with the claim that ISRAEL BEARS SOLE GUILT IN THE CONFLICT (in 24.7 % of the antisemitic comments). Slogan-like phrases such as "They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind!" ["Wer wind säht wird sturm ernten"] or "What goes around, comes around" ["sowas kommt von sowas"] BIL-YT3) suggest that Israel has cultivated the Palestinian terror – and, moreover, is in its very nature comparable to Hamas: "Terrorists terrorise terrorists😂😂" ["Terroristen terrorisiert die Terroristen 😂😂"] (BIL-YT4); "The Israeli army is not a bit better than Hamas" ["Die israelische Armee ist kein bisschen besser als die Hamas"] (BIL-YT5); A: "question: didn't the Israelis have the same thing in mind weeks ago?" B: "you mean the last 50 years" [A: "Frage hatten die Israelis nicht das gleiche vorgehabt vor Wochen?" B: "du meinst die letzten 50 Jahre"] (BIL-YT1). In this context, however, it is not always just about Israel's handling of Gaza, but about its very existence – A: "Unbelievable ... why all this?" B: "Read up on the founding of Israel. Then you'll know" [A: "Unglaublich .. warum das alles?" B: "Informiere dich über die Gründung von Israel. Dann weißt du es"] (BIL-YT3).

The notion of SOLE GUILT represents a significant concept of Israel-related antisemitism, followed by DEMONISING ANALOGIES as well as THE QUESTIONING OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST. Accordingly, users express themselves as follows: "Wasn't the land taken from the Palestinians in 1948?" ["Wurde den Palästinensern nicht 1948 das Land weggenommen?"] (ART-YT1) or become more explicit: "Hamas vs Israel tourist" ["Hamas gegen Israel Tourist"] (BIL-YT1).

In contrast to the British corpus, however, the third most common category is not that of DENIAL OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST, but the sharing of CONSPIRACY THEORIES (12.3 %): "How can such a huge enemy operation with hundreds of participants in neighbouring territory slip through the fingers of a highly networked secret service like the Mossad?. It makes me feel 9/11 all over again" B: "That was my first thought too 😉 It smells like a false flag..." [A: "Wie kann einem bestens vernetzten Geheimdienst wie dem Mossad so eine riesige Feindoperation mit hunderten Beteiligten im angrenzenden Gebiet durch die Lappen gehen? Da bekomme ich gleich wieder 9/11 Gefühle" B: "War auch mein erster Gedanke 😉 Das riecht nach false

Decoding
Antisemitism

flag…"] (ZDF-YT1); "That was allowed to escalate the situation" ["Das wurde zugelassen um die Lage eskalieren zu lassen"] (BIL-YT1); "...yet no one can tell me that the Mossad didn't notice. Of course it was aware of it.... It is what Netanyahu needs now..." ["...trotzdem kann mir niemand erzählen, der Mossad hat das nicht mitbekommen. Natürlich hat er das mitbekommen... Es ist das was Netanjahu jetzt braucht…"] (BIL-YT6).

Even in response to emotional clips that show interviews with the hostages' parents, users show little empathy ("[The father] is an actor" ["[Der Vater] ist ein Schauspieler"]) (SPI-YT1) and insinuate a staged attack for certain unspecified goals ("Out of sheer sadness open up a new settlement area and block food transports. That helps morale a bit" ["Vor lauter Trauer erstmal ein neues Siedlungsgebiet aufmachen und Lebensmitteltransporte blockieren. Das hilft der Moral etwas"] (SPI-YT1)).

The arsenal of antisemitic communication is of course much broader than presented here. Numerous posts RELATIVISE or DENY THE ANTISEMITIC CHARACTER of the terrorist attacks, formulate accusations of FREE PASS and INSTRUMENTALISATION OF ANTISEMITISM on the Israeli side, allege a NAZI-LIKE ATTITUDE in relation to the latter or reproduce themselves AFFIRMING REFERENCES TO THE NAZI ERA. For example, many users see the escalation in the Middle East against the backdrop of the Ukraine war and high refugee numbers. With the prospect of Israeli refugees, they resort to openly antisemitic jokes: "Where are you going to take the Jews now that gas is so expensive in Germany 😂" ["Wo wollt ihr die Juden denn aufnehmen wo das Gas jetzt so teuer ist in Deutschland 😂"] (EUR-YT1).

Another specific feature of the German discourse is that, in addition to the insinuation that Israel is a racist or even a Nazi state, commenters take the coverage of the current escalation as an opportunity to spread **anti-Muslim sentiment,** and in doing so, criticise Germany's immigration policy. In recent years, our research team has observed that some of the commentators who display sensitivity towards one of the two marginalised groups spread hate speech in relation to the other. Now, triggered by the current violence in the Middle East, this dichotomy gained even more momentum. At the same time, there is also increasing nationalist rhetoric that rejects both groups – Jews and Muslims – equally: "They can all deport each other for all I care..The main thing is that they don't all come to us!!!! That's the most important thing from now on!" ["Von mir aus können die sich alle gegenseitig verschleppen..Hauptsache sie kommen nicht alle zu uns!!! Das ist das Wichtigste ab jetzt!"] (SPI-YT1).

Decoding
Antisemitism

3. Insights into *Facebook* (UK, France, and Germany)

3.1 UK

3.1.1 Structure of the dataset

With the events dominating the UK mainstream news since the very start, and a huge response from web users in comments sections, in a short time we were able to collect a relatively large corpus of online comments. We selected twenty-two viable comment threads from the *Facebook* profiles of several media outlets (*BBC News*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Telegraph*). We found that in the total of qualitatively examined 2,200 comments 23.5 % were antisemitic – a relatively high proportion compared to our previous analyses of UK online discourse. Even more striking were the levels of antisemitism found in certain threads responding to graphic reports of the Hamas atrocities. In some of these threads, the levels of antisemitic comments reached an unprecedentedly high figure of 34–35 %.

3.1.2 Main concepts

Similar to both the *YouTube* findings from both the UK and Germany, by far the most common antisemitic concept in the UK *Facebook* dataset was the direct or indirect AFFIRMATION OF THE VIOLENCE perpetrated so far, or CALLS FOR FURTHER VIOLENCE to be levelled at Israel, Israelis or Jews. Some 33 % of antisemitic comments contained such AFFIRMATIONS, ranging from the more explicit praise for Hamas and its actions: "Amazing scenes coming from Gaza long live Palestine 🇵🇸" (IND-FB3), "Very Weldone Hamas...done great job...We fully support and Stand with Hamas... 👍❤️👍❤️👍❤️👍" (TEL-FB1), "more power to ham.as" (BBC-FB5), "Joyful 🎉 About time they taste it" (TEL-FB3), to expressions of support for Palestine, which in the context of graphic reports of violent attacks on Israeli civilians take on a dark, implicitly antisemitic intention: "About time Palestinians fight back 💂" (TEL-FB1), "Keep going freedom fighters. It's your right" (TEL-FB3), "you will lose o occupiers because freedom always wins! (BBC-FB5), "Free Palestine from Israeli brutality ❤️🇵🇸" (BBC-FB4).

The SUPPORT or CELEBRATION OF VIOLENCE was often justified via further antisemitic concepts, notably the idea that Israel bears SOLE GUILT for the conflict in general, or for this escalation in particular (17.7 % of antisemitic comments): "We support those heroes who retaliate against oppresive evil regime with war crimes and its barbaric assignations not only children also journalists" (BBC-FB6); "Of course, Resistance against zionist terrorist occupation on stolen land for 74 years are worth celebrating 🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸" (TEL-FB2).

There was a clear tendency to reject any distinction between Israeli civilians within Israeli borders, settlers in the West Bank, and military personnel. This justification strategy was often expressed in the outright DENIAL that Hamas had attacked any civilians at all ("Hamas

Decoding Antisemitism

did not kill any civilian person ... he attacked some of the occupied criminals and did not harm any child or civilian person" (BBC-FB3), "Modern news sounds like it's terrorists attacking but it's just people trying to get there homes back!" (IND-FB2)), that the civilians attacked or taken hostage were in fact members of the military ("most of the people there where off duty IDF members and reservists" (GUA-FB1), "heartless Israeli soldiers that's who - many of the ones captured have been exposed as off duty IDF soldiers" (GUA-FB1)), or that all Israeli citizens are legitimate targets for violent attacks ("Off duty prison guards partying next to the world's largest open air prison, call them what you like" (GUA-FB1)).

Antisemitic reactions to reports of the massacre at the Tribe of Nova music festival were characterised by particular glee: "'we are terrified' good, cry harder" (BBC-FB5), "At a rave 🤣🤣🤣🤣 gtfo" (IND-FB3). These comments were often accompanied by the NAZI ANALOGY, comparing Gaza to Auschwitz: "Supernova festival a bit like raving next to Auschwitz Birkenau (GUA-FB1), "Lol that's like having a rave next to auschwitz. It shows a disgusting lack of basic moral" (GUA-FB1).

Others rejected the idea that Hamas is a terrorist organisation or argued that Israel is, or even has been since its conception, a TERRORIST STATE (12.6 % of all antisemitic comments): "Only those without a shred of decency would deny israeli state terror is to blame for all this. In the great scheme of things Hamas came decades after israels reign of terror started." (TEL-FB2). Some comments described not only Israel but Jews as such as TERRORISTS: "We are not terrorist,your people are the terrorist trying to take over the World" (BBC-FB1).

Many comments used the Hamas attacks as an opportunity to delegitimise Israel as a state, DENYING ITS RIGHT TO EXIST (10.8 %): "Shameless zio squatters will never admit that they've created this mess." (IND-FB1), "Hopefully we see more of this stuff done back to the Zionists so they can run back to the holes they crawled out of in Europe" (IND-FB1), "Moral of this story , never Throw a party on someone else's land" (BBC-FB4), "not their homes, they should go back to russia and leave Palestinians in peace" (BBC-FB2).

The pervasive APARTHEID ANALOGY was activated with equal frequency: "Defending apartheid and land grabbing by the use of killings. This is disgusting! 🤮" (IND-FB1), "Probably shouldn't have had a rave next to the open air prison of an apartheid state 😑" (IND-FB3), "BBC News most biased pro isr hell reporting no conscience if you have any shame left show the truth of this evil apartheid regime and Gaza bombing n killing of infant children women men civilians" (BBC-FB4), "When Israel stops practicing apartheid, colonising yet more of other people's land, and stops being a good-match for 1930's Germany, then perhaps people will stop launching rockets at them. Till that day, tough!" (BBC-FB3). This last example layers further historical comparisons onto Israel, drawing COLONIALISM ANALOGIES as well as an indirect NAZI ANALOGY.

Overall, the high proportion and nature of antisemitic comments meant fewer neutral reactions than usual. It seems that, even in these ostensibly politically mainstream milieus,

Decoding Antisemitism

recent events have further shrunk the space for grey areas, with the debate becoming ever more polarised, and the discourse on both sides more radicalised. The antisemitic discourse emerging from the analysis is often entangled with anti-Western, anti-democratic, and misogynistic discourses (observed to various degrees across all datasets examined in this study), while some comments countering antisemitism contained anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racism.[10]

3.2 France

3.2.1 Structure of the dataset

The Arab-Israeli conflict has historically been a political, religious and cultural flashpoint in France, which is home to both the biggest Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe (Lons 2023). Since the Hamas attack on 7 October, there has been a clear upsurge in antisemitic hate incidents, both offline and online. According to French officials, thousands of antisemitic posts were reported via the governmental portal PHAROS, used to report illicit online content (*Le Monde* 2023).

Nevertheless, despite the magnitude of the attacks, this tragic event seemed to be less covered in the French media than in the British ones. We analysed 1,700 web comments collected from the comment sections of the official *Facebook* pages of seven leading mainstream media outlets: *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Parisien*, *Libération*, *BFMTV*, *France24*, and *20Minutes*.

Within that dataset, we found that 11.8 % of comments were of antisemitic nature. This proportion was slightly higher in the comments on articles reporting Hamas's attacks than in those dealing with the reaction of France or other Western countries. In both cases, the comment threads reacting to *Le Monde*'s articles contained the lowest number of antisemitic comments. Contrary to the findings of the analysis conducted on the British corpus, these numbers were very similar to the percentage of antisemitic comments found in our 2021 study of the brief Hamas-Israel escalation in May 2021 (12.6 %), or the spring 2022 wave of terrorist attacks in Israel (12 %). The stability of levels of antisemitism in mainstream discourse spaces seems to suggest that the dramatic escalation did not necessarily shift the ideological fault lines in French public opinion about the conflict, but merely reinforced and hardened them. Furthermore, a more granular quantitative analysis of the data showcases clear disparities within the data. The *France24* thread from 9 October

---

[10] Neither our current classification system nor our research expertise is sufficient to analyse all the worrying aspects (including other hate ideologies) of the communication surrounding the conflict and its coverage; we hope to see such research from experts in the respective fields.

Decoding
Antisemitism

has 57 % of antisemitic comments and is a clear outlier;[11] most of the other threads exhibit between 10 % and 17 % antisemitism while three threads have under 5 %, with two (*20Minutes*) having no antisemitic content.

3.2.2 Main concepts

By far the most prominent antisemitic topos out of the broad range of concepts and speech acts used by social media users was the direct or indirect AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE carried out by Hamas. 53 % of all antisemitic comments contained AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE; by contrast, it was present in only 20 % of antisemitic comments in reaction to the terrorist attacks that had been perpetrated in Israel in Spring 2022. This suggests that while overall levels of antisemitism remained stable, its severity and intensity increased.

Explicit support for Hamas' actions – such as "Long live Hamas" ["Vive le Hamas"] – is often diluted by more generic support for the Palestinian cause: "Total support to Palestine" ["Soutien total à la Palestine"] (FRA-FB1). AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE could also be articulated through the allegation that the attack was morally justified as self-defence or retribution for Israeli violence: "It is only payback for the Zionist parasites" ["Ils n'ont fait que rendre la monnaie de leur pièce aux parasites sionistes"] (MON-FB1); "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; it's the Talion, prescribed by the 3 religions of the Book 😏" ["Oeil pour oeil, dent pour dent; c'est la loi du talion, et elle est prescrite dans les 3 religions du livre 😏"] (MON-FB1). The religious references to Judaism and the smirking face emoji imply that Jews should accept the act of terrorism, as it is supposedly rooted in their own moral code. Biblical language was also used in the comment "What was taken by force will be retrieved by force. He who lives by the sword shall die by the sword" ["Ce qui est pris la force sera rendu par la force. Celui qui vit par l'épée périra par l'épée"] (BFM-FB1). This statement again suggests that Israel bears the guilt for the cycle of violence, but also hints at a collective responsibility of Israeli civilians for the actions of their government.

The NAZI ANALOGY was also a popular means to conveying support for Hamas and presenting Israel as THE ONLY PARTY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONFLICT. The organisation is compared to the French Resistance who opposed Nazism, through comments such as "How did we end up turning resistance into terrorism? During the Occupation, the Resistance took up arms against the Germans and they were glorified for it" ["Comment on arrive à transformer la résistance en terrorisme? Pendant l'occupation dans les années 40 la résistance ont bien pris les armes contre les allmands et on les a glorifié?"] (FIG-FB1), or "Israelis forgot about the

---

[11] The exceptionally high levels of antisemitism in the *France24* thread could be explained by several factors. *France24* is aimed mostly at an international francophone audience located in the Global South, where anti-Israeli sentiments are much more widespread. Secondly, given the low quality of comments (e.g. poor spelling,), it is possible that some of them are produced by fake accounts (Baruchin 2023). Even if these findings would need to be corroborated by a larger, more systematic study, they highlight the complex dynamics within the informational ecosystem around the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Decoding
Antisemitism

war in 1945…In the end, they are not any better. Palestinians are victims, just like French have been, like any country which is attacked" ["Israël ne se rappelle pas de la guerre 45…Finalement, ils ne valent pas mieux, la Palestine est une victime, comme la France l'a été, comme tout pays se faisant attaquer l'est aussi"] (FIG-FB2). The NAZI ANALOGY also functions as a radical delegitimisation device, where the Israeli treatment of Palestinians is equated with Nazi atrocities: "A people on which tons of phosphorus bombs are being dumped on, even Hitler didn't do this" ["Un peuple sur lequel on deverse des tonnes de bombes au phosphore meme Hitler n'avez pas fait ca"] (FIG-FB1); "Hamas is paying it back for their people killed since 48 by ✡ committing genocide (Holocaust), but a real one, and the perpetrators are the survivors of 45 🤔" ["Hamas rend la monnaies de son peuple qui se tue par les ✡ depuis 48 faisant un /génocide (holocauste) mais un vrais et les bourreaux sont les rescapés du 45 🤔"] (FIG-FB2). The last comments also map onto negationist narratives, by contrasting the "real" genocide of Palestinians with the supposedly "fabricated" one of the Jews. Last but not least, analogies can be articulated through puns and wordplay, such as in "Isra Heil" (MON-FB2).

Another frequently activated topos was the allegation that ISRAEL IS A TERRORIST STATE, built to mirror the labelling of Hamas as a terrorist group: "How many Palestinians killed by the terrorist state of Israel ⁉️‼️🤔" ["Combien de palestiniens mort par l'état terroriste d'Israël ⁉️‼️🤔"] (FIG-FB2). This accusation often maps onto the DENIAL OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXISTt: "Israel has no right to peace and security. For the simple reason it has no right to exist" ["Israel n'a droit ni a la paix ni a la securite. Pour la simple raison qu'il n'a pas droit a l'existence"] (FIG-FB1). Other users allege that Jews will try to instrumentalise the attack to extort more money, tying together the historical stereotype of GREED with the post-war allegation of WEAPONISING THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM: "They will ask again for money 😁 watch out for your wallets" ["Ils vont encore demander des sousous 😁 surveillez bien vos portefeuilles"] (BFM-FB2).

3.3 Germany

3.3.1 Structure of the dataset

Although the scale and brutality of the attacks have taken on a previously unimaginable dimension and this event has attracted and continues to attract a great deal of media attention, there is nevertheless a consistency in the frequency of antisemitic comments in the German dataset, similar to the French corpus and in line with the findings of the German-language *YouTube* analysis.

A total of 1,300 *Facebook* comments from five media outlets were analysed: 100 each from *Focus* and *Spiegel*, 200 from *n-tv*, 400 from *Welt* and 500 from *Bild*, the latter of which had the most extensive coverage on *Facebook* compared to the other media outlets. The

Decoding
Antisemitism

thematic focus of the threads was on general coverage of the situation, explicit coverage of Hamas atrocities, or Germany's response to both. In contrast to the results on the British side, the number of antisemitic comments is comparable to our study of the escalation phase in 2021 (13.6 %) or the terrorist attacks in spring 2022 (9 %), insofar as 11.6 % (n° = 152) of all comments were identified as antisemitic.

This seems to indicate that the level of antisemitic ideation showed (relative) stability, independent of specific circumstances within the Arab-Israeli conflict, even if a qualitative shift can be observed. We found an enormous increase in approval for the acts of violence in the German comments, particularly in the comment threads below articles which explicitly reported on Hamas atrocities: instead of empathy, they displayed up to 23 % antisemitic comments. This tendency to expressly affirm violence seems to indicate both a numbing within the discourse and a new level of publicly acceptable articulation of hatred.

3.3.2   Main concepts

In view of previous analyses in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict media coverage, it may be unsurprising that antisemitic statements occur at all, yet they shock with the simplistic blame narrative and underlying causal chain. For many web users, Israel is clearly identifiable as the guilty party; ISRAEL'S SOLE GUILT IN THE CONFLICT is the most frequent concept, at 34.8 %. It allows the comments to justify and legitimise Hamas' terror with Israel's alleged TERRORIST STATE apparatus and its general EVIL: "Terror? For decades, the Palestinians have been terrorised by Israhell, killed, robbed, living in prison. Their land and homes are stolen from them and you talk about human rights? Hypocrites. What would you do if the same thing was done to you? You cry when refugees come here. Wake up, their land is taken away from them every day and has been for decades" ["Terror? Seit Jahrzehnten werden die Palästinenser von Israhell terrorisiert, werden getötet, ausgeraubt, leben im Gefängnis. Ihr Land und ihre Häuser werden ihnen gestohlen und ihr redet von Menschenrechte? Heuchler. Was würdet ihr machen, wenn das gleiche mit euch gemacht wird? Ihr heult schon wenn Flüchtlinge herkommen. Wacht auf, ihnen wird jeden Tag das Land weggenommen und das seit Jahrzehnten."] (WEL-FB1). Within this narrative, a series of such comments create justification within which an argument is opened that Hamas acted solely out of the ongoing suffering of the Palestinian population: that Hamas was forced into a limited scope of action by Israel, since Jews or Israelis had allegedly robbed the Palestinians of the land that was rightfully theirs "The Jews are the problem. We all know that. They don't own the land" ["Die Juden sind das Problem. Wissen wir doch alle. Ihnen gehoert das Land nicht"] (WEL-FB1). In this way, the comments DENY THE JEWS THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION and, at the same time, use it as an argument to legitimise the terrorist attacks.

In addition to the ascriptions of TERRORIST STATE and EVIL, the comments convey concepts such as the NAZI ANALOGY: "They have been cramming the Palestinians into zones for years, as

Decoding
Antisemitism

happened to them during the Second World War. On the land originally stolen from the Arabs... and they wonder about resistance? Check out the history of Israel ! In the Holy Land, nothing is holy - on the contrary" ["Die pfärchen die seit Jahren die Palästinenser in Zonen ein, wie es damals im 2ten Weltkrieg mit ihnen passiert ist. Auf dem von ursprünglichen den Arabern geklauten Land.. und wundern sich über Widerstand??Erkundigt euch mal über die Geschichte Israels ! Im Heiligen Land ist genau ganix heilig - im Gegenteil"] (BIL-FB1), or the accusation of GENOCIDE against the Palestinian population: "Why has the headline never been: Genocide of Palastians?" ["Warum hat die Schlagzeile nie gelautet: Völkermord an Palastiänser?"] (BIL_FB2). The concepts are again used to establish the narrative of a self-fulfilling prophecy in the discourse, and to both relativise and legitimise the excessive violence on the side of Hamas. Striking within the global narrative of ISRAEL'S SOLE GUILT is the recurring use of metaphors such as "He who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind." ["Wer Wind sät wird Sturm ernten."] (BIL-FB1), the prevailing lack of empathy in non-antisemitic statements, which manifests itself everywhere in the discourse "My compassion is limited" ["Mein Mitleid hält sich in Grenzen"] (WEL-FB1), and verbal expressiveness when glorifying or approving of violence: "What the Palestinians pulled off was awesome - cheers to Hamas - awesome action" ["Geil was die Palästinenser da abgezogen haben ein hoch auf Hamas geile Aktion"] (BIL-FB2).

This AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE, which at 19 % is the second most frequent form of expression of antisemitic speech and a significant increase compared to 2021 (3.1 %), shows that although antisemitism occurs much less frequently than on the British side, it nevertheless appears just as drastically when the terrorist attacks meet with approval, such as: "Finally, great news 😂 Free Palestine 🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸)" ["Endlich tolle Neuigkeiten 😂 Free Palestine 🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸"] (BIL-FB3), or generalising expressions of support for Palestine: "Freedom for palestine ✌️ ✌️ ✌️ 🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸" ["Freiheit für palästina ✌️ ✌️ ✌️ ✌️ 🇵🇸🇵🇸🇵🇸"] (BIL-FB3) which in this context are to be understood as implicit AFFIRMATION OF VIOLENCE towards Israel. It is especially the use of flags and emoticons, due to their visual impact, that intensifies this message and allows it to be directly experienced.

Alongside our focus on antisemitic comments and the concepts expressed within them, one important aspect distinguishes German discourse from that in the UK and France. Particularly significant here is a strategy that can be described as derailing, which usually contains a racist dimension: In all threads (to a varying degree) the conflict is used as a starting point for criticising the German government (which has supported Hamas financially) or German migration policy (when migrants have publicly spoken positively in favour of Hamas terror, or when all Muslims are portrayed as a danger to both Jews and Germany). The latter can also be interpreted as an externalisation of antisemitism by identifying it exclusively as a problem of the Muslim population, in order to avoid dealing

with the latent antisemitism of the rest of the German population, evident in the comments on both *Facebook* and *YouTube.*

References

ADL (Anti-Defamation League), 2023. J7 Statement on Antisemitism in the Wake of the Hamas War on Israel. 17 October 2023, https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/j7-statement-antisemitism-wake-hamas-war-israel (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

BBC, 2023a. Hundreds feared dead at Gaza hospital as Israel denies strike, 16 October 2023, https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-middle-east-67119233 (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

BBC, 2023b. Why BBC doesn't call Hamas militants 'terrorists' - John Simpson. BBC, 11 October, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67083432 (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

Biesecker, Michael, 2023. AP visual analysis: Rocket from Gaza appeared to go astray, likely caused deadly hospital explosion. AP News, 21 October, https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-hamas-war-hospital-rocket-gaza-e0fa550faa4678f024797b72132452e3 (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

Baruchin, Rotem, 2023. 1 of 4 Pro-Hamas Profiles Are Fake: The Online Battlefront. Cyabra. 11 October, https://cyabra.com/1-of-4-pro-hamas-profiles-are-fake-the-online-battlefront (last accessed on 20 October 2023).

CST (Community Security Trust), 2023. CST Blog Antisemitic incidents – 23 October update, https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2023/10/23/antisemitic-incidents-23-october-update (last accessed on 25 October 2023).

Ducourtieux, Cécile, 2023. Why the BBC doesn't call Hamas a 'terrorist' group. Le Monde, 13 October, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/10/13/why-the-bbc-doesn-t-call-hamas-a-terrorist-group_6170744_4.html (last accessed on 25 October 2023).

IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance), 2016. Working Definition of Antisemitism. https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism (last accessed on 25 October 2023).

Lakoff, George, 2014. The all new don't think of an elephant!: Know your values and frame the debate. Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing.

Lons, Camille, 2023. Torn apart: How the Israel-Hamas war is dividing French society. European Council on Foreign Relations, 19 October, https://ecfr.eu/article/torn-apart-how-the-israel-hamas-war-is-dividing-french-society (last accessed on 20 October 2023).

McLaughlin, Charlotte, 2023. BBC News deputy CEO admits 'mistake' in live coverage of Gaza hospital bombing. The Independent, 20 October, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/bbc-news-bbc-gaza-grant-shapps-palestinian-b2432797.html (last accessed on 20 October 2023).

Decoding
Antisemitism

Mounk, Yascha, 2023. How the Media Got the Hospital Explosion Wrong. The Atlantic, 23 October, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/10/gaza-hospital-explosion-misinformation-reporting/675719 (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

Le Monde, 2023. Guerre Israël-Hamas : « plus d'une centaine d'actes antisémites » signalés en France, selon Gérald Darmanin. 12 October, https://www.lemonde.fr/israel-palestine/article/2023/10/12/guerre-israel-hamas-plus-d-une-centaine-d-actes-antisemites-signales-en-france-selon-gerald-darmanin_6193936_1667123.html (last accessed on 20 October 2023).

RIAS (Recherche- und Informationsstellen Antisemitismus e.V.), 2023, Antisemitic reactions in Germany to the Hamas massacres in Israel, https://www.report-antisemitism.de/documents/2023-10-18_en_antisemitische_reaktionen_in_deutschland_auf_die_hamas-massaker_in_israel.pdf (last accessed on 25 October 2025).

Saviana, Alexandra, 2023. Israël - Hamas : comment le conflit au Proche-Orient stimule l'antisémitisme en France. L'Express, 12 October, https://www.lexpress.fr/societe/israel-hamas-comment-le-conflit-au-proche-orient-stimule-lantisemitisme-en-france-BYCFOMN4ERASZCG6LUKFDVMR5E (last accessed on 25 October 2023).

Telegraph, 2023. Top BBC executive says 'mistake' made in reporting of strike on Gaza hospital. The Telegraph, 19 October, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/19/bbc-report-mistake-ahli-arab-hospital-israel-hamas-war (last accessed on 25 October 2023).

Sources

A. *YouTube* UK

BBC-YT1, BBC News, October 8th, 2023, "Israel confirms soldiers and civilians taken hostage by Palestinian militants," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr9bkjhoFGA.

BBC-YT2, BBC News, October 8th, 2023, "Israel orders 'complete siege' of Gaza as rocket attacks continue," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-_800P3Jxw.

BBC-YT3, BBC News, October 9th, 2023, "How the Hamas attack on the Supernova festival in Israel unfolded," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sHxRcebDzM.

BBC-YT4, BBC News, October 9th, 2023, "700 dead in Israel as it 'declares war' on Hamas," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXrVtabZggI.

GUA-YT1, The Guardian, October 7th, 2023, "'We are at war': Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu makes statement on Hamas attack," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAm2RAbAc-Y.

GUA-YT2, The Guardian, October 7th, 2023, "Hamas publishes video showing armed militants entering Israeli military camp Hamas publishes video showing armed militants entering Israeli military camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv-QxAojyms.

GUA-YT3, The Guardian, October 7th, 2023, "Israel: Bulldozer filmed taking down section of Israel-Gaza border fence," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yezlk8tfpbU.

GUA-YT4, The Guardian, October 8th, 2023, "Israel launches military response as Israel-Palestine war escalates," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kng5ggLay28.

Decoding Antisemitism

GUA-YT5, The Guardian, October 8th, 2023, "Fighting between Hamas and Israel escalates as conflict enters second day," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EM571fa_rOA.

GUA-YT6, The Guardian, October 9th, 2023, "Parents of abducted Israelis plea for information, demand answers," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULNjQmySUjg.

GUA-YT7, The Guardian, October 9th, 2023, "Israel drone footage shows aftermath of Tribe of Nova music festival attack," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzQrOVWgzsM.

IND-YT1, The Independent, October 7th, 2023, "Hamas fighters appear to paraglide across border in released footage," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgqAvFGML7c.

IND-YT2, The Independent, October 9th, 2023, "Woman kidnapped by Hamas fighters in front of helpless boyfriend at Israeli festival," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2OEktej8pk.

IND-YT3, The Independent, October 9th, 2023, "Hamas paragliders descend on Israel music festival as people flee massacre," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEouVpzdVXk.

IND-YT4, The Independent, October 10th, 2023, "Massive explosions in Gaza as Israel launches airstrikes in response to Hamas attack," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyz-g26zXKo.

IND-YT5, The Independent, October 11th, 2023, "Israel-Palestine attack: Hamas militants commit massacre in Kfar Aza," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93cb3m5IZSM.

TIM-YT1, The Times, October 7th, 2023, "Hamas release dramatic footage claiming to show dawn raid on Israeli compound," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnS9ejxEajo.

TIM-YT2, The Times, October 8th, 2023, "Lebanon's Hezbollah pledges support for Palestinian militants," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UA7Iy5yAQUw.

TIM-YT3, The Times, October 8th, 2023, "Terrifying moment Hamas militia take Israelis hostage," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_id4dqWWbg.

TIM-YT4, The Times, October 9th, 2023, "Hamas targets drones at Israeli positions in latest attack," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imwWXuS2CQQ.

TIM-YT5, The Times, October 9th, 2023, "Israeli festival goers gunned down by Hamas as they flee Supernova music festival," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kumvHVGaetM.

B. *YouTube* Germany

ART-YT1, Arte, October 10th, 2023, "Israel und Hamas: Die Karten werden neu gemischt | Mit offenen Karten – Im Fokus," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB46yA7ken0.

BIL-YT1, BILD, October 7th, 2023, "Terror-Überfall auf Israel | BILD-Lagezentrum SPEZIAL," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCgzW0eRIS4.

BIL-YT2, BILD, October 10th, Hunderttausende israelische Reservisten einberufen | Paul Ronzheimer," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOQp1udl0-k.

BIL-YT3, BILD, October 7th, 2023, "Palästinensische Terroristen greifen Israel an," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0CNCiEKG60.

BIL-YT4, BILD, October 10th, 2023, "Volltreffer auf Waffenlager: Israelische Luftwaffe schlägt zurück," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ov7ym3sYW7Y.

BIL-YT5, BILD, October 10th, 2023, "Reaktion auf terroristischen Angriff: Israel zerstört Hamas-Hochhäuser," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsImkHZ3ijw.

BIL-YT6, BILD, October 9th, 2023, "Olaf Scholz zum Krieg gegen Israel | Pressekonferenz des Bundeskanzlers," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2DoFcDvlEc.

Decoding Antisemitism

EUR-YT1, EuroNews, October 7th, 2023, "Großangriff der Hamas auf Israel Großangriff der Hamas auf Israel," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyFTEqWw1ww.

EUR-YT2, EuroNews, October 7th, 2023, "Hamas-Blutbad auf Israels Straßen: Netanjahu: 'Wir sind im Krieg' | BILD Live – Sondersendung," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3C3YZLSpeM.

SPI-YT1, Der Spiegel, October 11th, 2023, "Israelischer Familienvater appelliert an Hamas: 'Tut ihnen nicht weh!'," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cZjYpqhEcY.

SPI-YT2, Der Spiegel, October 10th, 2023, "Hamas-Angriff auf Israel: 'Der abscheuliche Feind wollte Krieg, und er wird Krieg bekommen'," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wPSkEnmqdQ.

ZDF-YT1, ZDFheute live, October 9th, 2023, "Hamas startet überraschende ‚Militäroperation' gegen Israel: Was wir bislang wissen," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmfJ1NLAENA.

C. *Facebook* UK

BBC-FB1, BBC News, October 7th, 2023, "The surprise attack also saw dozens of gunmen storm southern Israel from Gaza," https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid0yVyUEKhFTUXw59qvGUvM8Z2YYVsnUWSQzuqoRDVHNhM9MsZSbLCxrG92GyHEt5agl.

BBC-FB2, BBC News, October 7th, 2023, "'I hear their voices and they are banging on the door'," https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid0JaPAtmpACVN6uLLJCQcSDDxEa45mCboJKwodoHd2YkF8VxCvmfUVKS4JHvwv1PYNl.

BBC-FB3, BBC News, October 7th, 2023, "The risk of a flare-up between Palestinian militants and Israel has been deepening for months, writes the BBC's Jeremy Bowen," https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid02sTr1VM7dfqPtizRhnJy7exNjaFcoDCTBpksk7nU6zi8fzZHQz2CRvDfLiNGVMzByl.

BBC-FB4, BBC News, October 8th, 2023, "'Out of nowhere [militants] come inside with gunfire, opening fire in every direction,'" https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid0aT2MwGEGMfjkR6odo1NaVYZps63oWXAFBQt6xqdeicKLb9G3pEUNanpff6cAMuyTl.

BBC-FB5, BBC News, October 9th, 2023, "Palestinian militants launched the type of widespread surprise attack that no-one expected," https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid0dFJxnRmMuxLdnPzwcEQyxLygJBAXGDFhcZzXSg9CKZ8z9ZDBHJPH6zMgkpbKzXhxl.

BBC-FB6, BBC News, October 9th, 2023, "Palestinian militants may still be entering from Gaza, Israel says," https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/posts/pfbid03g6PwdCfFA4LV9epT6jqPY8cGDdczbSUhwVRhqJ1ikAUkNNthocx3rgFDL26AqVVl.

GUA-FB1, The Guardian, October 9th, 2023, "How the Hamas attack on the Supernova festival in Israel unfolded," https://www.facebook.com/theguardian/posts/pfbid02jNgRGPh8uw7kywD4x6QFfjKuDfK7zPzTE35kVZYP9K31h3Ptbmc7GxSHKJDL8Jjxl.

IND-FB1, The Independent, October 8th, 2023, "Netanyahu vows revenge after Palestinians launch biggest attack on Israel in decades," https://www.facebook.com/TheIndependentOnline/posts/pfbid0TR1pLruA8SCHofWCmP5VVQZ3WyypFMeQiqCVXKaX4VSpb3Hrm5b5vczw6L2rU2J3l.

Decoding Antisemitism

IND-FB2, The Independent, October 8th, 2023, "The former Labour leader said 'all attacks are wrong' and repeated his call for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestine,"
https://www.facebook.com/TheIndependentOnline/posts/pfbid02i4tProM9GVF6FWFcpJAqqywXL9xJaRTmJterLvbpZqWXV6mf3PGRaN7iXh3nHTeJl.

IND-FB3, The Independent, October 8th, 2023, "My terror as Hamas bombs fell on us at desert rave
https://www.facebook.com/TheIndependentOnline/posts/pfbid03xNDR4JBCQojevNnsQwKSokr5T7SN1FpZaSrzeNiYAC3RagFSZ5erqYyhXqCkQWrwl.

TEL-FB1, The Telegraph, October 7th, 2023, "The prime minister of Israel has declared the country is at 'war' after Hamas launched an unprecedented surprise multi-front attack on Saturday morning,"
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=207578918902926.

TEL-FB2 The Telegraph, October 8th, 2023, "Migrants in Europe celebrate Hamas assault on Israel. Videos of a camp in Greece show Palestinians and other asylum seekers cheering on attacks from Gaza,"
https://www.facebook.com/TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/posts/pfbid0NrWiQpcDgzWkPwyKXUeajHKQkwSxpGL4RMqcsyfUzpqGcZMq4tHS6i6Dt8rwmoHQl.

TEL-FB3, The Telegraph, October 9th, 2023, "Israel's military says it is still battling against Hamas fighters in 'seven to eight places' on its own territory as security forces struggle to regain control following Saturday's wide-ranging attack,"
https://www.facebook.com/TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/posts/pfbid0PqqtbdonrGxqWFoTrj5NwNo1T7hbUvbbCFZVjyU7AUpQN1aY3CCXKzr2S7ak6F8hl.

D. *Facebook* France

BFM-FB1, BFMTV, October 9th, 2023, "Borne dénonce une forme de 'complaisance' de LFI sur les attaques du Hamas en Israël," https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=891194789031086&set=a.825581355592430.

BFM-FB2, BFMTV, October 9th, 2023, "Le CRIF appelle à un rassemblement "de solidarité" place d'Israël à Paris,"
https://www.facebook.com/BFMTV/posts/pfbid02otEhLqiy15htzwnAfLkoRncrQW4bToZ7SXn5aZt2pwRfZC82RCwzkudB6maX7aJ1l.

FIG-FB1, Le Figaro, October 8th, 2023, "Attaque du Hamas contre Israël : LFI ne condamne pas, Borne dénonce les «ambiguïtés révoltantes» d'une partie de la gauche,"
https://www.facebook.com/lefigaro/posts/pfbid02mHrXDmTJdsWpgqxdqeKhDvry2RB8KjsgfXE4361PU91rRxhVBa3ZLjkeAACeu42fl.

FIG-FB2, Le Figaro, October 8th, 2023, "En Israël, au moins 300 morts et plus de 1500 blessés selon un nouveau bilan,"
https://www.facebook.com/lefigaro/posts/pfbid02GNpksbk8bNDoQJdN2rTr9tUiiCxKzbNDZNoW4N2pPPkAXyiy8LtVC9uaZtPzbHial.

FRA-FB1, France24, October 9th, 2023, "L'attaque du Hamas,"
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1989487488094092.

MON-FB1, Le Monde, October 8th, 2023, "L'attaque du Hamas contre Israël, un séisme politico-sécuritaire,"
https://www.facebook.com/lemonde.fr/posts/pfbid0369hjPgsyBiNTGrWuFbMvhtrQUWCvRn2oWvorXBrkUNq6PnkCgnM1ATRFAd3fvHXel.MO.

N-FB2, Le Monde, October 8th, 2023, "En Israël, dans les rues de Sdérot, les stigmates du carnage causé par les assaillants du Hamas,"
https://www.facebook.com/lemonde.fr/posts/pfbid0JnPt8bZAeAC9wvYagRJr8d3u6WYgnCBZEwaW7r5hvBGHv9Eg9NTiYrND8kn2kJ5sl.

Decoding Antisemitism

E. *Facebook* Germany

BIL-FB1, Bild, October 9th, "Israel riegelt Gazastreifen komplett ab,"
https://www.facebook.com/bild/posts/pfbid02CPqygC7tvtwebUbQAojSUURx4iEU2LvjS4w5rpQTQBN8VBg
QHTbPk7kjosPTPTWdl.

BIL-FB2, Bild, October 9th, "Angriff auf Israel: Diese Solidarität muss nicht nur heute sein,"
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=303369638998018.

BIL-FB3, Bild, October 9th, "Krieg führen und Geiseln befreien: Israels unlösbare Aufgabe,"
https://www.facebook.com/bild/posts/pfbid0JLjNcCqEKCnpSZdaD2zP6KmpcsKB72r2d44N7eQX2zgBaLq1m
v11KZoA1pnaocwFl.

WEL-FB1, Welt, October 8th, 2023, "Hamas überfällt Israel: „Sie veröffentlichen auf ihren Accounts, wie sie die
Leichen missbrauchen," https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1356450965257543.

Decoding
Antisemitism